Water Quality Advisory Group
September 28, 2000
Conference Room D

Minutes

Members present: John Fekete, Tom Anderson, Bill Beranek and John Wilkins.
Audience: Kari Simonelic, Neil Parke, Barbara Scott, Don Larson, John Elliott, Dennis Clark, Lonnie Brumfield, Paul Werderitch, Randy Lewis and John Humes.
John F.: We have a specific focus with a limited lifespan.
Barbara: Technical group recommendations may be ready by end of October first of November. If we have left anything out, please let me know.
Introductions
Dennis: Synopsis of last meeting. Everybody learned a lot. We have come up with a method on how many samples we will need. Made progress on di minimus number. Discussion on ambient background. We would like to come up with background information that can be used throughout the program. Next meeting is October 3rd in Room 1045 from 10 – 4. Peter will be here.
John F.: Level of quality assurance. Need to look at statistics. It's not going to be one size fits all approach.
Barbara: Statistical process control.
Dennis: A person that really knows statistics can come in handy.
Tom: What is the status of the Water Quality Data Task Force?
Dennis: Talked to Erika yesterday. They have a perspective list but don't have final approval.
John F.: When have information will forward to Barbara or Julie for distribution. What is status of Tom and Kari's discussion?
Kari: We have had preliminary discussion but would like to sit down and discuss tables completely. If we are placed on the next agenda that will provide motivation for us to get together. We need to identify differences and similarities on documents E & K.
John F.: There were some questions on the flow chart (C2) from Neil last time. All gray boxes were not cast in stone. Comments/suggestions on outstanding documents?
Tom: TMDL workgroup will begin meeting on October 4th. Meeting monthly for 18 months.
Lonnie: Working on spreadsheet program using Neil's flow chart. Added more to the spreadsheet. Hope to have something in graph format.
John W.: Technical information very helpful to smaller technical group.
Barbara: Revisit significant lowering. Yes, di minimus is appropriate.
Tom: For non bcc's?
Barbara: Yes, non bcc's and non great lakes. Different percentages have been discussed. Do we continue with Triennial or use those for the great lakes?
Lonnie: Must consider the impact of di minimus.
Barbara: Lower di minimus easier demonstration. Higher di minimus harder demonstration.
John F.: Intent: where we are with water quality.
Dennis: Whole concept of di minimus – we can't deal with every small question. It is a resource limiting point.
John F.: Comments/thoughts? Bill?
Bill: See chart of Lonnie's then discuss percentages. Not enough information to make a judgement at this point.
John F.: At this point we just don't know.
Tom: Maybe review Bowden's comments next time. Di minimus or streamline anti degradation process.
Barbara: Set a di minimus and then set process – that is the question.
John F.: Need a little more information. We need to know the magnitude of the problem.
Bill: Need clear understanding of what we are doing. Some decisions the agency is making are okay. Some need public participation. Two main categories: worth it for me in a social sense to expand. Greater than negative impact I'm causing. Looking at best available technology. Balance socially and economically. The second is better than the best.
Dennis: Two tests in Tier II. Lowering of water quality is necessary to do what you want to do. The next question is how we have a social, economic evaluation.

Bill: What is the State's criteria going to be? If starting from scratch each time this will be very complicated.
Dennis: If have reasonable di minimus level it will motivate people to meet di minimus levels to avoid other hoops.
John F.: Di minimus vs. difficulty. Di minimus vs. water quality.
Bill: More like a flow chart. Extreme – BAT decision for each industry. Need to come up with a reasonable number.
John W.: There is a process at the federal level for industries. Are we looking at that?
Bill: Then we are back to case by case. May not go along with BAT's for each one.
Dennis: Still required to meet water quality. BAT would be the di minimus? That may not be good enough.
John W.: Go through a process to establish a BAT for each industry?
Bill: How will they make that decision? First the social issue. Then make di minimus.
John H.: Air permitting process goes top – down. Becomes more of an economic question.
Bill: Must be the same. Whatever it is.
John H.: No cut off point in our permitting process. In this case maybe give a range of numbers. Need baseline.
John F.: Would the agency or applicant evaluate the process?
Dennis: In anti degradation have to meet water quality standards. If have di minimus, gives some guidance on standards. If you keep it below the line it cuts back on the hoops.
Bill: What we are thinking about is what is the di minimus going to be? What is the degree of proof? Then arguments of social benefits. Have to produce information. State then decides if that is enough information.
Dennis: Some of value of di minimus is lost already.
Bill: We need to determine criteria here in this room.
Maggie: Take focus off exemptions/exceptions and place it on unknown's?
Barbara: That approach would work depending upon level of di minimus.
Bill: Clearer to what we are getting in to or out of. This may be an IDEM resource issue. Right now it is case by case.
John W.: Haven't put as many resources in non-point sources. Finite number of resources. What are we doing to work on non-point sources?
Barbara: Can not expand our di minimus to meet that. Our number of demonstrations cannot motivate the di minimus.
Don L.: WQBEL's? TMDL standards.
Dennis: Obligation to maintain water quality standards. Haven't addressed non-point sources.
Neil: Less anti degradation with higher di minimus. Ceiling for economic spending. What is the ceiling on spending? Di minimus one hand, di maximus on the other. At what point is it too costly?
Bill: All have agreement on what the anti degradation demonstration is first.
John W.: Still a resource question for IDEM.
Barbara: What is demonstration criteria?
Bill: What is the degree of proof? Is it going to be a small or large number?
Barbara: Decision criteria.
Dennis: What has to go into anti degradation? Discuss this first then discuss di minimus.
Bill: Yes. May be talking about 5 or 500 types of issues.
John F.: Go through steps then discuss di minimus.
Dennis: If we are going this route need to have other information.
John F.: Come up with best guesses. Lonnie has some numbers. Try to develop a concept.
Dennis: Not convinced this will help us make a good decision.
Bill: There will be other factors. Effect intensity of concern. Just choosing 15% is not a rational discussion. 15% is yes/no. Right now not everyone will understand impact. First decide impact.
Dennis: We are going to go through all this and still find out we won't have the resources. We can work through demonstration first.
Don L.: It's not just the agency – it's the whole State.
Dennis: Di minimus is not a prohibition.
Maggie: The other things are so vague. It may be a stopper. The unknown is so huge.

Tom: Our purpose is to maintain and restore water quality. Non-point source issue – know anti degradation does apply. It is the overall charge of this group to look at this.
Barbara: Catching that in background contribution.
John F.: Are there ways to streamline this? Consider coming up with a hypothesis of what will happen with the applicants that come in. Just give best guess. Then reduce population at each level. Then work our way into di minimus. What are the processes we go through? We will come back to non-point source issues. Closing comments?
Dennis: Concentrate on maintaining water quality criteria above required standards.
Bill: I would be willing to help out with questions that come up beforehand.
Adjournment